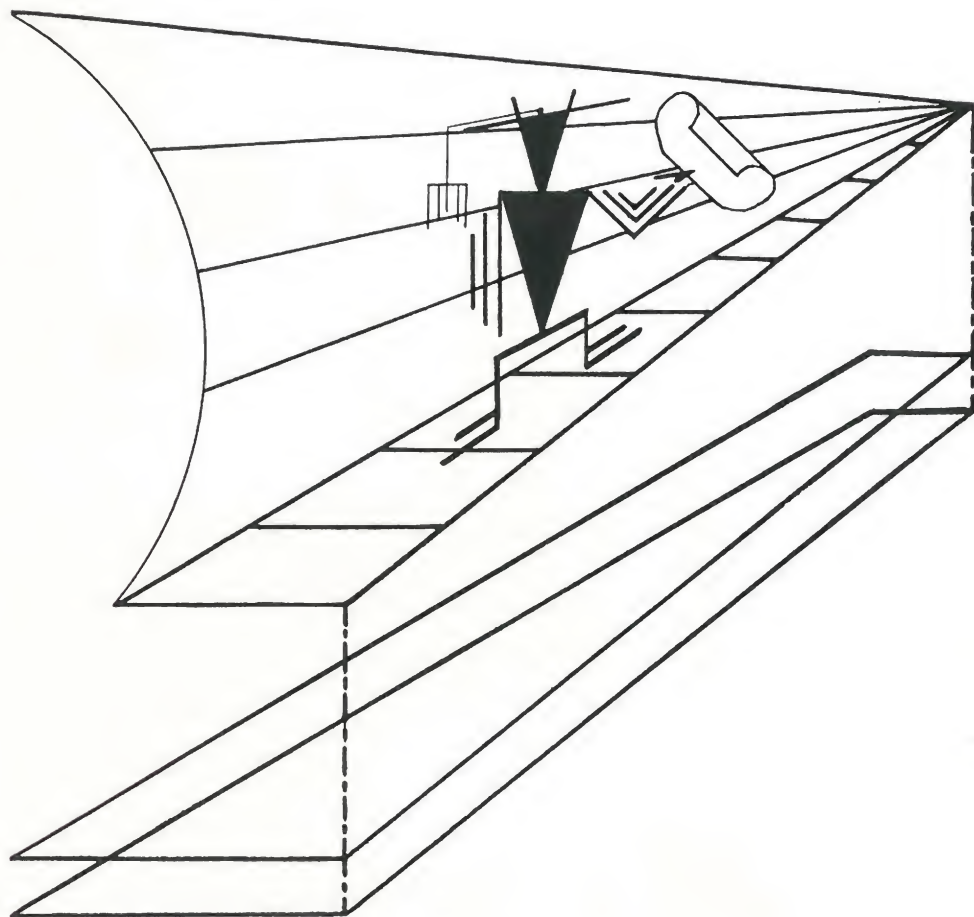


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...and on home

by

John

Klawitter

I had just left her house. It was five o'clock in the morning. As I drove eastwards through town the car seemed to drift through fuzzy pink clouds. She was some girl.

The weather was poor, the roads still bad, as they were four hours ago when I drove her home. Icy rain slanted down on the car. The rain came down harder as I neared the edge of town, and those pink clouds changed to grey-white fog. The public park entrance ran low to the left, a short branch-off which disappeared into misty eddies of the thick atmosphere.

The car moved under a dark iron bridge and out of town. I drove slowly, but the road was slick. Keeping the car under control required constant attention. The town's friendly glow was gone and I breathed apprehensively of the chill dead air. Everything, the road, the low sky, the landscape all around me, was a deep grey, almost black, except where the car lights momentarily

illuminated the road ahead. I was not quite relaxed. It was as if someone had tied a small knot in my brain; a knot which would be reached in the near future as the string was played out; a knot that warned of weak thread ahead.

A glare at the next lonely hilltop—an approaching car. My left foot stabbed at the floorboards. The lights flicked to dim. Nothing but darkness until I reached the hill crest. Then a white glare from twin spots. We roared towards each other, that car and I, and I could not see the road. My knuckles grew white as I gripped the wheel. "Damn you, flick off those brights!" Outlined glimpse of a passing car, and the angry smash of a handful of slush against the windshield, and again the road ahead was dark, while cold fog squeezed in around the car.

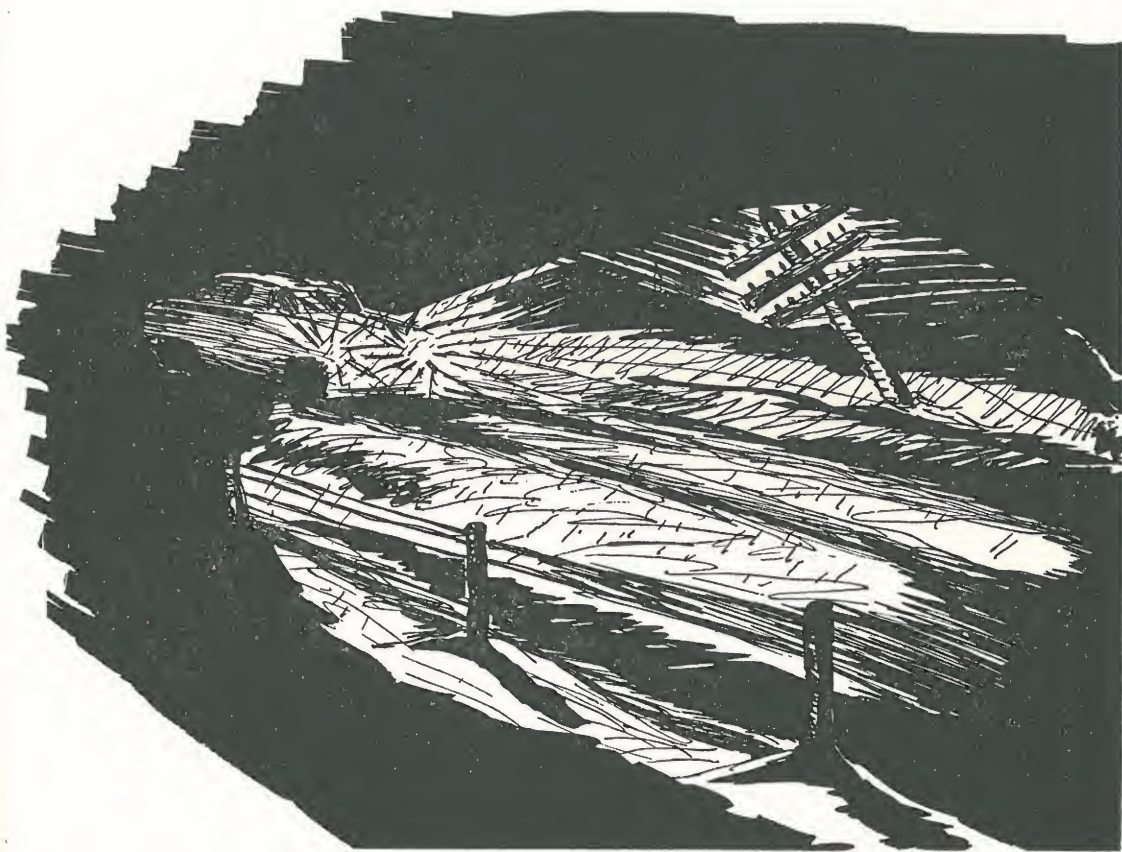
I drove on for a mile, two miles, three miles. Other cars had rutted the icy roads. Mine lurched and slewed unsteadily in the ruts. Visibility was not good. I flicked the brights on. They seemed better. But it was still hard to see, because the light reflected against the falling sleet and drifting fog. I flicked back to dims. They didn't throw much light. Not much light—

I stiffened like a frightened cat. Once before on a black night my

lights had slowly faded to a dim orange. Then they had gone out, and I had raced for miles along a black highway until the engine had quit. My eyes flashed to the battery gauge. Steady discharge. "Damn that generator anyway!" Why didn't anyone else ever have this trouble? No, always me, and always in the middle of the night. What to do? Go back to town? Gamble on making it home? Home was many miles away, the town but a few. But to go back to town would be a kind of giving

in. Life is but the playing of a game of cards, and it is not right to always beg for a new deal. It would be quitting to go back.

The wheels spun, caught on the icy pavement. Thirty-five miles an hour. Forty. The car went into a skid to the left. I controlled it and moved back into my lane. Forty-five. The longer I drove, the weaker the battery would get. Speed. I had a killer for a traveling companion. Fifty. Fifty-five. The car moved like a motor-boat, in control as long as we moved



straight ahead. Things seemed all right, yet at odd moments the car would shift or skid as one or several wheels lost traction.

The speedometer read a steady fifty-five while the grey world whipped crazily by the windows, and the night rain pounded the car with cold bullets. Instead of driving through the ruts, the car now forced a path of its own. The wheels dragged to the left, for I drove in the center of the road, the left wheels pushing through the slush piled along the center.

Long miles passed. The head lights grew feeble and threw off a dim orange light. I left them on bright, yet it got harder to see with each passing minute. A black square outlined in red lights appeared on the road ahead; a large truck wallowed through the road snow in front of me. I passed him in a whirl of snow and fog. Far in the distance, the first friendly stop light glowed like a beacon. And then I saw another sign of life—a car, moving in my direction. Two hundred yards from me, his headlights tilted in a weird slant across my lane and into a stubby corn field to my right. I thought that he probably had been in an accident which jarred his lights out of line. Fifty yards, and I saw that he was stretched lengthwise across the road, his rear wheels off the pavement. Ten yards—I'm not going to make it, there's no room for my car to get through. Ten yards, and it looks like I've played out my hand. "It may have been a poor deal, but it's

mine and I'll finish it out." One image of a frightened face, or perhaps I glanced in the mirror, and I flashed by with inches to spare.

"God, what a close call. Thank you, O God. Maybe now you'll slow down, not only tonight, but whenever you drive, the rest of your life. You could have been killed, you fool." But something else flared inside me, like a cold flame, and I didn't slow down. You see, when you ride with a killer and he tries something and fails, you think because it didn't happen, well, it won't happen. I smiled a thin smile and pressed hard on the gas pedal.

Fifteen minutes passed. I cut the engine and coasted into our drive-way. For a time I sat there, not looking at anything, not moving, like some great brooding animal, while the sleet drummed softly on the rooftop.

Moments passed. I looked up, across the street to the key-makers shop, where the light from his advertising signs played in the drifting currents of fog. Somehow I started thinking about the girl I was with tonight. She was nice, when she wanted to be. I guess she had wanted to be tonight. Getting out of the car, I walked through the crusted snow towards the house, the fog still all around me. But now it was a tame fog, and to me it looked kind of pink and fuzzy. It must be the neon lights, I thought with a grin as I stabbed the key around in the dark doorway, searching for the keyhole.

Prophet of the Moderns?

by
**Gary
Madison**

One of the most active trends in philosophy today is existentialism. Even so, it is difficult, almost impossible, to define; it is not a school and it does not possess a common set of tenets. In fact, there are about as many different types of "existentialism" as there are existentialists, and the most prominent among them, such as the German, Karl Jaspers, insist that they are not "existentialists" at all. There are atheistic existentialists like Jean-Paul Sartre and vitally religious ones such as Gabriel Marcel. However, behind all their diversities the one thing all these people have in common is their intense concern with life and their search to discover a meaning in it. And because of this prime interest, they are generally antagonistic towards traditional philosophies, such as Thomism, which they label academic, superficial, and remote from life.

It is precisely this charge that many philosophers working in the main stream of Thomistic thought have attempted to answer. Two such philosophers are Jacques Maritain, now on the faculty of Princeton University, and Etienne Gilson. Maritain has done much to reveal the emptiness of many of the charges leveled by the existentialists; he has attacked and exposed the superficiality with which they view the intellect and its power to know by showing that their anti-intellectualistic tirades are directed against a distorted concept of the intellect which developed out of the ma-

terialistic philosophies of the last few centuries and not against the real intellect. Maritain insists that the most proper object of the intellect is existence itself, and that as a result Thomism is an existential philosophy, an "existentialist intellectualism."

Etienne Gilson also emphasizes the existential character of Thomism. St. Thomas' philosophy is, he says, essentially a philosophy of dynamic being, of the very act of existence in things. This emphasis he shares with Maritain, who in his book, *Existence and the Existent*, affirms that Thomism is primarily concerned with concrete, individual subjects which have essences, and which, more important, exercise existence.

Actually Thomism, as a philosophy, realizes and fully respects the uniqueness, goodness, and wonderfulness of this life, and it does not disparage it in order to better emphasize the next. For Gilson this follows from "the central intuition which governs the whole philosophical and theological undertaking of St. Thomas . . . that it is impossible to do justice to God without doing justice to nature, and that doing justice to nature is, at the same time, the surest way of doing justice to God." Further, Thomism is really interested in the individual man living here and now, the problems peculiar to him as an individual, the uniqueness of his personality, his social character, the fact that he can fully realize himself only in relation to other existing human

beings. Gilson sums this up in saying that we, as disciples of St. Thomas, "believe that every man is a person in his own right. We are constantly moulding ourselves, as an artist ceaselessly busies himself in completing his work. As an artist, too, we sometimes make it better, and sometimes worse; what our final success will be we never know for sure until the last instant has arrived. Even then it is not for us to pass judgment: God alone can do it. The only thing we are sure of is that, good or bad, our life will then appear what we ourselves made it to be." There is much here in common with Sartre when he says that "Man is nothing else but that which he makes of himself." It is a feeling for the importance of life as an experience and the dignity of the person.

Finally, in answer to the accusation by the existentialists that Thomism is academic and general and thus removed from the problems of the individual, we have only to return to and reconsider what St. Thomas, who realized the danger of this tendency in philosophy and sought to avoid it, said seven centuries ago: "General discourses on morals are of little use because actions are concerned with particulars."

Faced though Thomism is with the challenge posed by the existentialists, it would be a mistake if we were to go to the opposite extreme in emphasizing the relevance of St. Thomas' thought to our times. Gilson has observed that St. Thomas may be regarded as

something of a prophet of the contemporary period, stressing as he did certain notions with which we are only today much concerned. And there are such facts as the following which tend to substantiate this view: St. Thomas' doctrines were attacked in his time on all sides, by Augustinians, Franciscans, Neoplatonists, and Averroists. After his death he was involved in the condemnation by the bishop of Paris of certain Averroist and Aristotelian doctrines, his works were in part forbidden and his doctrines proscribed, and his philosophy was censured by the Universities of Oxford and Paris. These are facts, and they may help to make St. Thomas a "prophet," but they can never make him into a genuinely contemporary character.

For although St. Thomas' philosophy is not limited to the Middle Ages, it is expressed in an essentially medieval manner. And if it is true that what we say is in a way bound up with the way we say it, then it should not be difficult to see the need for a re-

expression of many of the ideas of St. Thomas, to see the necessity, in the words of Pope Leo XIII, "to restore the golden wisdom of St. Thomas, to extend and perfect the old by new truths." Much of what we are concerned with today, St. Thomas was concerned with in the Middle Ages. Much of what we are saying now, he said then. But the way he said it, is not the way we do. Were St. Thomas writing the *Summas* today, he certainly would not write them in the same way as he did then. Indeed, St. Thomas must not be thought of as having had the last word; there is much that he did not say, or said in such a way that it must be reformulated to be really meaningful today. There remains much for Thomists to do — *opus philosophicum semper perfectibile*. Thomism as a philosophy, and more than this, as a wisdom, can never be contained within the covers of a book. Indeed, if it is the perennial philosophy, it must constantly grow and renew itself.

SPRING AND

DRAFTS

How nice to see the winter go,
With all its chill and icy stunts
And crystalline precipitance,
The sleet, and hail, and driving snow.
But most of all whose leave I cheer
Are all those winds that bit my cheeks
For, oh, so many winter weeks,
Like rabid dogs that fled their fear.
Now days of spring fill season's cups.
Fresh breezes neither hurt nor snap,
But tickle us and gently slap,
Like playful, friendly-toothings pups.

DRAUGHT

"But how,
Sir, can that be?
I swear I see
Right now
Ice and snow,
I vow,
In quite substantial stocks."
"I see.
But what you slight
Is quite all right
With me.
I enjoy
My Spring—
Like bourbon—on the rocks."

WINTER AIRS

THE TRANSIENT

We hold our breath
To see the seasons come
And go.
Entranced we watch
The water-wheel of time
Scoop notch by notch
In August hours
The April showers
Up
Through autumn's death
To skies December,
Whence they fall again,
White-dumb,
As snow.

A TRANSIT

A happy dove I saw
This spring
Prepare its nest
Of sticks and straw
And string,
An axe-bound tree its berth.
That foolish bird! I thought
To me.
But he possessed
More sense inwrought
Than we
Who straw our nests on earth.

—Francis Creel

A Low Contented Belch

DEDICATION

I feel that it is necessary to explain that all persons and places which appear in this story are fictitious; and any resemblance to person or persons, living or dead, is wholly plausible; however, I do not know of any such people (thank God!).

This story is dedicated to the furthering of higher education, and to the hopes of higher octane gasoline. It is also dedicated to the thinking man, to the man's man, to the man who knows, and to the next man to have his picture on the cover of *Time* magazine.

—Francis Jozaite

One of the most colorful events of the school year at State University is the annual Student Council Elections. The student body looks forward to a week of frivolity, excitement and an extra excuse to hold wild parties. The faculty just puts its head down, takes a running start, and charges through the week. It is common knowledge around State U. that unless a candidate belongs to a fraternity, is widely known, is a BMOC (Big Man On Campus), and is despised by a two-thirds majority of the faculty, he doesn't stand a chance of being elected.

Humphrey Lyndon qualified in only two of these vital classifications. He was a member in "double D" standing (deeply in debt) of the Sigma Deapa Fri Fraternity, and was high on the Black List of all the faculty members, except that of the head of the Egyptology department, who was still digging around an old tomb in Egypt.

Sigma Deapa Fri was, by all means, the most unpopular frat on campus. Two of the sororities took solemn oaths that they would leave school if they ever stooped so low as to accept a date from a Deapa Fri. This unpopularity didn't ruin the morale of the twenty-four members; on the contrary, it gave them something to fight against. Up to the week of council elections, the Deapa Fries were fighting a losing battle. Af-

ter dinner on the Saturday before Election Week, the Sacred Five of the fraternity, the officers, engaged themselves in an informal business meeting which, after a good five minutes, took the form of a poker game.

"What'll we play?" asked the president, Bob Crutchley.

"Seven stud, nothing wild," replied the secretary, Fitch Greensbey.

"Who'll deal?" asked the vice-president, Rick Ocupado.

"I will," the treasurer, Sam Goldberg, said. "What's the stakes?"

"Penny ante," declared Humphrey Lyndon, Sergeant-at-Arms.

"Let's make it for more," said Sam Goldberg. "I feel lucky tonight."

"Money, money, money! That's all you ever think about."

"Talked to one of them Beta Gamma girls today," said Rick.

"Who are you trying to kid?" smirked Humphrey.

"Yeah! They wouldn't talk to any of us if we were their own fathers!"

"Which one?"

"Your eight is high, Bob."

"That blonde who always wears those tight sweaters."

"You mean that sophomore with the flat chest?"

"Yeah, that one."

"You mean the one with the braces on her teeth?"

"Yeah."

"So what's so great about her?"

"Nothing, I just talked to her, that's all."

"Did she talk to you first?"

"Yeah, that's what I mean. She talked to me . . . Four cents to me? See you. Like I said, she talked to me first."

"That's an accomplishment!"

"You said it!"

"Yer dealing from the bottom again, Goldberg!"

"Ah, are you accusing me of cheating?"

"Shut up, Flitch! Deal, Goldberg."

THE REST OF THE HAND passed in silence. Sam Goldberg won the pot with a flush. As he raked in the meager winnings, he exclaimed, "Guess this is gonna be another one of my lucky days!"

Rick Ocupado, engaged in deep thought, spoke up. "Fellas," he said, "we got a lousy reputation on this campus."

"So what else is new?"

"Lousy isn't the word for it! Our name is muck!"

"I'm serious fellas."

"He's right," said Bob.

"Yeah!"

"Sure!"

"So what?"

"We've got to do something about it. We've got to drag our rep out of the muck and mire, it isn't what we desire."

"Hey, you're a poet! 'Muck and mire, what we desire!'"

"It lost something in the translation."

"Forget the poker game," said Bob, as he threw his cards up. "We have business to discuss."

"Aw, I could spit! I got an ace-high straight going."

"Forget it, Sam. This is more important."

"Bob's right," said Humphrey.

"Dam' right I'm right!" Bob exclaimed, as he stood up, threw his shoulders back, clasped one hand on his forehead, the other on his heart, and said in reverend tones, "We, the humble members of the Grand and Glorious Sigma Deapa Fri Fraternity of State University, have a monumental task laid out for us. The way is clear to us all; the path is straight and true! Men cry, 'Peace! Peace! But there is no peace.' The next wave from the faculty may bring to our ears the clash of resounding text books! I know not what course others may take, but for me, give me a good reputation for the Sigma Deapa Fri, or give me death!"

The other four around the table stared at their president throughout his speech, then rose, and in unison lifted their voices in reply:

"Death!"

"Aw, for petes sake! Can't a guy get serious around here?"

"Sure, what you say is great, Bob, but what can we do?"

"I dunno." He looked around to all of his colleagues. "Think! Think!" he urged.

They thought, and they thought. They thought for five minutes, ten, thirty. They thought for an hour, two, four. At the stroke of midnight Humphrey jumped out of his chair, leapt onto the couch and bounced about wildly while waving his arms er-

ratically and all the while exclaiming loudly, "I got it! I got it! I got it!"

"Throw some water on him, will ya!" said Bob, as he unsuccessfully tried to calm him down.

Flitch hastened to comply. He tossed the water into the hysterical face of his fraternity brother. It didn't do any good.

"There's only one thing to do," said Bob.

"Yeah," they agreed in harmony.

Bob made a fist and swung hard at Humphrey Lyndon. This method worked, only now he was unconscious.

"Get some more water."

"Got it!"

"Give it to him."

"All at once, or a trinkle at a time?"

"Don't be so sadistic, all at once."

"Stand back!"

"Yeeoooooowee!"

"What's the matter, Humphy ole boy?"

"Save me—I'm drowned!"

"Drowned?"

"Drowning idiot, he thinks he's drowning."

"Here, Ace," said Sam, throwing a pillow on the soaked Humphrey, "grab onto this and we'll haul you in!"

"Cut the fun, you guys!"

"Bob! What happened?"

"You went berserk."

"So I slugged you!"

"You what!?"

"Sorry, Humphy, but it was the only way!"

"You had no right to slug me."

"You were delirious!"

"You was crazy!"

"I am not crazy . . . am I?"

"Listen, Humphy, ole boy, what were you so excited about?"

"Well, the last thing I remember is sitting at that card table thinking about what we could do. Then as the clock struck midnight . . . As the clock struck midnight . . ."

"Yeah, yeah! Go on!"

"I got it! I got it!" He flopped into the couch.

"Not again!"

"I got a great idea!"

"What is it?"

"Wait, let me think."

"Oh, Lord! He's got to think!"

"Shut up and let 'im think!"

"Student Council elections are coming up—right?"

"Right!"

"So what about 'em?"

"Why not one of us Deapa Fries run for an office?"

"Huh?"

"Are you kidding?"

"No! Why not?"

"Get serious!"

"Get this boy to a drier climate!"

"Listen! Why couldn't we?" Bob pondered.

"Are you serious, Bob?"

"Yeah, I'm dead serious!"

"I'm tired!"

"Oh, supposing we put someone up—what office?"

"President, of course!"

"President! Are you nuts?"

"Hey! I like the idea!"

"I'll string along."

"I'm going to bed!"
 "Quitter!"
 "You guys are out of it!"
 "Yer a quitter, Flitch!"
 "All right, so I quit!"
 "Aw, go to bed!"
 "Don't feel that way, fellas. It's just that you're all nuts!"
 "Are you with Humphy and me on this, Sam?"
 "Yeah, all the way."
 "And you, Rick?"
 "Sure!"
 "Okay. Now, let's get organized."
 "Who?"
 "Who what?"
 "Who are we going to run?"
 "I dunno!"

THE FOUR STARED at the worn rug. Sam looked at Rick and Bob, then steadied his gaze on Humphrey. Rick completed the three sets of staring eyes. Humphrey looked up from the floor and looked at his frat brothers.

"What are you staring at me for?"

"You!" exclaimed Bob, pointing a finger at Humphrey.

"Me!"

"You!"

"Me?"

"Yes, you!"

"Not me!"

"You!"

"Fellas!"

"It was your idea."

"But . . ."

"Then you're the one!"
 "But . . ."
 "No buts, you're nominated!"
 "You'll run on the Deapa Fri label."

"Fellas, do you realize that this is the first time in twenty-five years that the Sigma Deapa Fri is running a candidate for Student Council?" Bob said. "Do you know why?"

"No, why?"

"Because the Alpha Malaria Fraternity prohibits it."

"No!"

"Yes!"

"No!"

"He's right, fellas. The Alpha Malaria took an oath never to let a Deapa Fri take any office on campus."

"Why they can't do that!"

"When did they take this oath?"

"Thirty years ago, and they pass it down to all members. For five years we tried to run candidates after they took the oath. Three of the candidates quit school during election week, the other two spent the rest of the semester in the hospital."

"They can't do it!"

"We have to fight!"

"They can't do it!"

"You have to run, Humphy"

"I'll do it! I'll run!"

"They can't do it!"

II

"Do you think we can get away with it, Bob?" Sam asked, as he put the final signature on Lyn-

don's petition that Saturday evening.

"Sure! They'll never check two

hundred and fifty names."

"But, two hundred and fifty forged signatures, Bob! I feel kind of guilty about it."

"Look, Sam, we got to get Humphy in—don't we?"

"Yeah."

"We need this petition to put him in as a candidate—don't we?"

"Yeah."

"How many signatures could you get if we went about this thing using the right procedure?"

Sam thought a while. "You're right! This is the only way!" He picked up the stack of signatures and stapled them together.

HUMPHREY STRUGGLED into the room under a load of books. "Hi, fellas! Get my petition signed?"

"Yeah," said Bob. "Just finished it . . . I mean, put it together."

"Great!" Humphrey said, as he dumped the books on the table.

"Are you taking up reading?" inquired Sam, as he picked up one of the books. He browsed through some of the titles:

How to Win an Election, Ten Ways to Beat Libel While Campaigning, Twenty-five Tried and True Campaign Programs, What Today's College Students Want, and How to Win Friends and Influence People.

"What are they for?" he asked.

"They're for the campaign," said Humphrey. "I thought they might come in handy."

"Never can tell," said Sam as he opened the book *All's Fair in Love and Politics*.

"Say, that was a great sign you

had over the front door," Humphrey said dryly.

"Yeah, how about it! In bright orange, Lyndon for S.C. President."

"Wait a minute," interrupted Bob, "what do you mean HAD up?"

"Well," said Humphrey, "it's strewn in ten pieces on the front lawn now."

Sam glared at Bob. They nodded knowingly. "Alpha Malaria!" they cried out in unison.

JUST THEN, as if on cue, in burst four of the biggest members of the Alpha Malaria fraternity.

"What do you want?" Bob yelled as he fled to the opposite side of the room.

"What's dis we hears about you guys runnin' somebody fer Student Council President?"

"You heard right," Sam creaked in a vain attempt to put up a brave front.

"Which one o' you characters is dis Lyndon guy?" asked the biggest of the four, as he grabbed Humphrey by the collar and pulled his slight, five-foot-eight frame until it was dangling and was face to face with the goon—in mid-air!

Humphrey swallowed hard. "I guess I am," he replied meekly. Then his voice cracked and he asked in a high squeak, "Why?"

"Fellas," barked the big one into Humphrey's face, "do you think we should moider 'im?"

Bob broke in, "Oh, I really don't think . . ."

"Who's askin' you, pipsqueak?"

shot another of the Malaria henchmen. He continued, "Nobody runs against our Rocky Crane—and lives!"

"No one!" said Bob, as he tried to back through the wall.

"Listen!" said the big one releasing Humphrey, "we's gonna let youse live now, but, if we hears any more about youse and your stupid ideas about runnin' fer president, you ain't gonna get off so easy, like. Understand?" He slammed Humphrey into the wall.

No one said a thing as the four apes strutted out of the frat house, quite proud of their victory.

"Why you big, brainless clods!" Sam exclaimed when the Malaria members were safely out of ear-shot.

"Well," sighed Humphrey, as he flopped into a chair, "I guess that's all for that!"

"What do you mean?" cried Sam, "You're not going to quit now, are you? You're not going to let those stupid morons lead your life, are you? You're not going to let that Alpha Malaria fraternity break your spirit, are you?"

Humphrey looked up at Sam. "Yeah! I sure as hell am!"

"What?"

"Sure! Do you want to see me killed?"

"Wait a minute, Humphy," said Bob, "Sam's right. We can't give in. Once we do we're beat. We might as well dissolve the frat."

"Don't you see, Humphy, we got to win this election!"

"It's for the frat."

"We can't let the boys down."

"They're depending on you."

"They'll be outcasts!"

"For the frat, ole boy."

Humphrey broke down and started to cry. "Fellas," he sniffled, "I'm sorry. I . . . I . . . I'll never let the frat down." He fell apart completely and buried his tear-filled eyes in his sleeve. "Honest I won't!" he babbled.

"There, there, Humphy, ole boy," consoled Bob. "You just weren't yourself."

"Here," said Sam, offering Humphrey his handkerchief, "Blow."

BLAT!

"Out of the pan into the fire to die. Anything for good ole Sigma Deapa Fri—Brother Wallcot entering!" Joe Wallcot shouted the Fraternity Emergency Call as he came into the frat house with Purity Prudenton.

EVERY MEMBER in the house put down what he was doing to answer the call.

"Light the fire—what's up isn't down!" all exclaimed, while assembled around Joe and the visitor.

"Purity Prudenton!" exclaimed Bob, when he recognized the President of the Beta Zestee Thi Sorority. "What are you doing here?"

"She finally saw the light, Bob!" Joe Wallcot said, as he clasped his hands over his heart.

"That's right," Purity said.

"I don't understand!" Bob said.

All in the room took two steps

forward so as not to miss a single word. Humphrey thought his solar plexes were blasting off for the farthest reaches of outer space from the moment his eyes fell on the delicate figure of Purity Prudenton. There can be no words to express how his heart wanted to fly out to her; how he wanted to hold her in his arms, and feel her soft, loving fingers run through his hair, and whisper into her ear how much he loved her; how he longed to hear her soft voice reply to his tender words; how he—oh, he was in love! "Grand and glorious love," he thought. "Where has she been all this time that I haven't seen her so I could love her! I have to speak my love to her, bare my soul!" These thoughts filled his head and blurred his eyes. He brushed aside a gleeful tear as Purity began to explain why she came to the Sigma Deapa Fri.

"Well, you see," Purity began, "it's this way. Two weeks ago the Alpha Malaria Frat held their annual Spring Frolics Dance. Well, the queen of the dance was to be selected from my sorority, the Beta Zestee Thi. Well, do you know what they did?"

"No, what?" the Deapa Fries chorused.

"Well, the dirty louses chose the queen—and her entire court!—from the Alpha Consola Fella Sorority, that's what!" she humphed.

"Huzzah!" the frat members huzzahed in disbelief.

"Well, we've been waiting for some way that we could get even

with them for this humiliation," Purity said, with a trace of deviltry in her voice, "but good!" she added for emphasis.

"But, pray tell us," Bob asked, as he bowed courtly, "how may we be of service?"

"Well, if Rocky Crane, the president of the Malarias, was to be defeated in the Council Election . . ." She stopped suddenly as her eyes peered into Humphrey's. A flame shot through her! "What is this flame shooting through me?" she asked herself. "What can it mean? That man over there, the way he's staring at me!" The flame shot once again and she clasped her bosom. "Love!" she thought. "Have I found my one-and-only?" Her heart was overjoyed. "Yes! Yes, he is my love!" She brushed aside a tear that was rolling down her blushing cheek. Not a sound in the room could she hear outside of the passionate poundings of her heart. Finally, she came out of her enthralling trance enough to hear Bob say, ". . . and with the support of your sorority, our boy," he moved over to Humphrey and patted him on the shoulder, "Humphrey Lyndon, will be a sure winner for Student Council President!"

"He's your candidate?" Purity asked dreamily.

"Yes, he sure is!" Sam said patting Humphrey's other shoulder.

"That's nice," she said.

"When can we get together to work out the campaign?" Bob asked.

"That's nice," Purity drawled.

Bob stepped in front of her, breaking the beautiful trance.

"Well?" he asked.

"Well what?" she asked innocently.

"When?"

"When what?"

"When can we get together?"

Purity brushed Bob away and walked up to Humphrey. "Why don't we go someplace where it's quiet and discuss this matter, Mister Lyndon?" she asked, looking up into his starry eyes.

"I think that is a swell idea, Miss

Prudenton," he answered, as he extended his arm for her.

She hooked onto him and they glided in a somnambulistic state out the front door.

"What's gotten into them?" Flitch wondered, as they watched the close couple turn and walk toward the parking lot.

"I shudder to think." Bob mumbled. "Com'on, let's get to work on the campaign. Remember, we have only six days left till the election Friday night!"

III

Humphrey and Purity drove out to the hill overlooking the campus in Purity's new Mercedes-Benz, and for two hours they neither talked nor moved a muscle. They just sat and looked into each other's eyes. In Purity's limpid, off-brown eyes, Humphrey could see the eyes of a woman who was madly in love with the man she was looking at. And Purity could see her long-sought-for happiness in Humphrey's light-brown left eye, and security in the green of the right eye. But Purity realized that even if Humphrey was the poorest student at the university (his creditors firmly believed he was!), she would still love him. After all, wasn't her father the owner of the gigantic Prudenton's Lollipop Corporation? Surely her father would give his own son-in-law a position as president of one of his factories. "Isn't he ever going to ask me the question?" worried Purity. "How long do I have

to wait? Do I have to ask him? Is he shy, perhaps? I will if he doesn't soon."

"She's lovely," thought Humphrey. "No! She's beautiful—gorgeous, and she'll be mine, all mine. But do I have the nerve to ask her? Will she want me?"

"Will he want me?" Purity asked herself.

"Will she?"

"Will he?"

"Dare I ask her?"

"Dare I ask him?"

"I will!"

"I will!"

The silence broke when both of them shouted, "Will you marry me?"

They looked at each other in utter disbelief.

"He loves me!"

"She loves me!"

"He wants me!"

"She wants me!"

"Yes!" they whispered to each other.

They embraced.

"This is utter madness!" Humphrey said, as he bit her ear lobe.

"Yes!" she said, as she ran her fingers through his crew cut.

"Sheer, utter, complete, crazy madness!" he said, as he bit the other ear.

"But isn't it fun?" she said, biting his jugular vein.

"What will your parents say?" he said, as he rubbed his neck and wiped a little blood away.

"Daddy will just love it and mother will have a fit!" she said, as she massaged her ear. "What will your parents do?"

"Jump for joy!" he exclaimed, now content with just holding her. "When mother meets you, she'll cry."

"Sad to see you go from her?"

"No—happy."

"And your father?"

"He'll probably pinch you on your . . ."

"Devil, isn't he?"

"Quite!"

"And then?"

"Then mother will bat him on the head, and he'll go to the john and read a western."

"How nice."

"Yes."

"I love you."

"I love you."

"How nice."

"Yes."

THEY SAT THERE and talked until the sun appeared behind them and cast a glow over their faces. Humphrey looked hard at her and exclaimed, "Now I know!"

"What?"

"How you look in the morning!"

"Do you like?"

"Yes!"

They sat for a while longer—'till the sun was high over their heads.

"About the election," started Humphrey.

"That is what we came here to discuss, wasn't it?"

"Yes. Now what about it?"

"We better go to church," she said remembering that it was now Sunday.

"Together!"

"Yes!"

"How nice!"

They pried loose from each other and she drove to the campus.

"Look at the center aisle," she said, as they neared the church.

"Why?"

"Soon I'll be coming down one such aisle—as your bride-to-be!"

"Wonderful!"

"Yes!"

"How nice!"

IV

The Sigma Deapa Fri Fraternity house had the aura of a mortuary. The members sat in sorrowful solemnity all that morning,

through the afternoon, and far into the night.

"What could have happened to them?" Flitch wondered.

A cloud crossed in front of the moon. The clash of the thunder cracked through the night. A second cloud crossed the moon, and soon the sky was filled with heavy rain clouds. A rumble of thunder rolled in the sky and heralded the rain which now fell as a solid wall.

"Huzzah!" Sam huzzahed, as he spotted Humphrey and Purity walking up the front walk.

"Are they come?" Bob shouted. "I mean—here . . . are they . . . are they here come? Come they here are?"

"Yeah!" said Flitch, as he watched over Sam's shoulder. "And get a load of them! Raining felines and canines and they're casually strolling arm-in-arm!"

Bob sank into a chair as his worst fears seemed to be realized. "They're in love."

Purity and Humphrey glided into the frat house in the same somnambulistic way they glided out over twenty-four hours earlier.

"Where the hell have you two been?" shrieked Bob. "If it wouldn't hurt your campaign, I'd have called the missing persons bureau and gotten the police looking for you."

"I'm sorry, Bob, but Purity and I—me and Purity—Purity and me . . ."

"I know, I know," said Bob sickly, "you're in love."

Purity and Humphrey lingered for awhile in their mutual loving gaze.

"Look, Humphrey, we have some embittering news that can't wait,

so will you and Purity mind un-locking each other for a minute and return to the world of the breathing?"

"OK, Bob," Humphrey said with a choked voice as he slowly released Purity's arm. "Maybe you had better go back to the sorority house, Purity honey."

"All right, Lyndon, see you tomorrow after biology."

"Don't go, Purity," Bob said, "this concerns you too."

"What's up?" Purity asked.

"Break it to 'em gently," Flitch whispered to Bob.

"Listen, it's this way," Bob started to explain, "the Malaria boys paid us another visit about two hours ago. They said that the next time they see you, they're going to make sure you spend a few months in the hospital."

"What happened?" Purity asked.

"It seems that they found out about your Zestee Thi sorority giving support to Humphrey. And that two other sororities who had disagreements with the Malaria at one time or another figured that this was a good time to strike back, so they are going to support you for president, Humphrey."

"That's g r e a t!" Humphrey sang.

"Not for you." Flitch said quickly.

"Why not?"

"Humphrey, ole boy," Bob said, as he held him by the shoulder, "don't you understand? The Alpha Malaria intends to maim you.

Do you realize what that means? Maim you!"

Fear took hold of Humphrey. He began to shake nervously. He grabbed every part of his anatomy he could reach in jerky, spasmodic movements.

"Grab hold of yourself, Humphy!" Bob shouted.

"Hurt . . . I . . . me hurt . . . they . . . hospital put me in . . . maim! . . . I . . . Malaria hurt me!"

"Easy, Humphy, easy!" Rick pleaded.

Purity was calm and quiet because, at the mention of the word "maim," she fainted and now was prostrate in the center of the room.

Finally Humphrey was completely exhausted from his violent convulsions and he, too, collapsed.

"Get some water, somebody," Bob murmured, as he shook his head in pity.

WHEN PURITY and Humphrey were brought around, they were once more informed of their horrible dilemma. "Either you run and get worked over, (Bob was careful not to use the word "maim.") or you drop from the running and be a social outcast."

"Wait a minute!" Purity uttered in protest. "He doesn't have to do either."

"How?" inquired Bob, who was as interested as Humphrey in a way out.

"All he has to do is stay out of Alpha Malaria's way, and he won't get . . . hurt."

"But they'll be looking for me everywhere," protested Hum-

phrey. "They're bound to find me sooner or later."

"Not if you go into hiding," she informed him.

"She's right, Humphy," Bob said.

"It'll be great for the campaign!" Rick said. "Imagine this now: Lyndon forced into exile to escape rough-house tactics of Alpha Malaria! Can't you see how much sympathy we'll evoke on campus?"

"Honorable exile, Humphy, honorable exile!" Bob gleefully intoned.

"HOW'S THE VOTING GOING?" Humphrey asked Purity, as he nervously bit off his last finger nail.

"Just great!" Purity said. "You're a shoe-in, you can't possibly lose."

"Purity, I didn't mind going into exile. I didn't mind missing all my classes and falling hopelessly behind. I don't mind eating cold food all the time. I don't mind any of this if it will make you proud of me, and if it will help good ole Sigma Deapa Fri. What I do mind, my darling, is having to have spent an entire week up here in this damn bell tower."

"I know it's been hard for you, but tonight, after the voting results are in, it will be all over and you can come down."

"Put these in your ears, Purity—quickly." He handed her two large swabs of cotton.

"Why?" she asked, while she stuffed them into her ears.

He didn't hear her question, however, for it was eight o'clock and the gigantic bell began to hammer out the hour.

It is said that on a clear day, and when the wind is right, the bell from the old campus tower can be heard in Squirmingville, a town thirty miles over the state line.

It wasn't until eight thirty that Humphrey could again hear with any comprehension.

"Look!" Purity said excitedly, as she pointed to the front of the Student Union Building where hundreds of the student body were mobbing. "The election must be over and they're announcing the results."

"Now can I go down?"

"Yes, now!"

Humphrey and Purity emerged from the tower just as a resounding cheer went up from the crowd by the Student Union. Humphrey and Purity walked toward the crowd. One of the them turned suddenly and shouted, "There he is! There's Lyndon!"

The mob turned and ran toward Lyndon, who stopped dead in his tracks.

"Run, Purity!" he shouted. "It's the Malaria. They're ganging up on me. Run!"

"No they aren't, Lyndon. They're smiling, they don't want to hurt you."

"Yes they do! They're smiling at the thought of my blood!"

"Darling, you won! Can't you see? You've won the election."

Humphrey didn't see, and ran as best he could for the opposite end of the campus.

The crowd swept by Purity. She didn't know whether to rejoice or cry.

Humphrey, calling for the police as he ran, disappeared into the woods at the end of the campus. The cheering mob disappeared after him with shouts of, "Get him! He's ours!" and, "Huzzah!"

After a fruitless two-hour search, the hunting, cheering mob gave up all hopes of seeing their Council President-elect, and disbanded into the nearest pool halls, saloons and other student activity centers.

OUT OF THE HIGHEST tree, Humphrey descended from his hiding place and, by the darkest route possible, he made straightway for Bill's Bar and Bar (the sign reads *No Dining, No Dancing, Just Drinking*) to drown his sorrows.

He entered the dark bar by the side entrance and took a stool at the end of the bar. The bartender came over to him and asked for his order, continuing to polish a mason jar until it glistened.

"Anything you got," Humphrey answered sullenly, "just make it a double."

When he got his drink, he downed it in one long swallow. As he coughed desperately to regain his breath, he looked about the quiet room to find only one other man.

"He thinks he's got troubles," Humphrey said, as he ordered an-

other double anything.

"He does," replied the bartender, as he filled Humphrey's glass. "He was just defeated for president of the Student Council over at the university and thrown out of his fraternity. Seem's he lost to some simpleton from a cruddy fraternity."

"Huh?" Humphrey asked, as the bartender refilled his glass.

"What'smatter? Trying to get drunk fast?"

"Just fill 'er up."

Humphrey worked his way through seven more double anything's before he looked up from the bar. At the other end of the bar, with his head buried in his arms, Rocky Crane was crying uncontrollably.

Humphrey took immediate pity on him, for surely he, too, had as great a problem as did Humphrey.

"I must cheer him up," Humphrey told the bartender. "I can see that he is a man who needs cheering up."

Humphrey strode over toward the opposite end of the bar. After three false starts and two stumbles, he finally reached the stool next to the sobbing Rocky.

"Bartender," Humphrey said, as he straddled the stool, "set up two more a da shame fer me and my pal."

"Here," Humphrey said, as he offered Rocky the drink, "drink dish—it'll clear yer mind."

"Thanks, Pal," Rocky replied, as he accepted the gift. "Yer a real pal, Pal."

"Yeah, Pal, but a doomed pal,

Pal."

"Dat ain't nottin', Pal. Have I got troubles! Have I ever got troubles!"

"Couldn't be ash mizzer . . . mizy . . . bad ash mine, Pal."

"I'm a defeated man, Pal."

"I'm a dead man, Pal."

"Too bad."

"Yeah, dash what I shay."

"Shay, Pal, ya wanna hear all 'bout my troubles?"

"Shure, Pal. Den you listen to mine too, huh?"

"Sure!"

They ordered another round of drinks as Rocky explained his state of affairs.

"Hey," interrupted Humphrey, "are you Rocky Crane?"

"Yeah!" answered Rocky, surprised that Humphrey knew his name.

"Well, guess who I am!"

"Who?" Rocky asked, after he drained his glass.

"Go on, guess."

"I'm too damned tired ta gesh now. Com'on, who are ya?"

"Me? I'm the guy yer gonna maim an' hurt."

"Yer Lyndon?"

"Yeah."

"Lemme give ya some advise, Pal. Get out of town—quickly."

"Dash a good idea. Tell ya what . . . Let's have a drink on it. Bartender, two more."

"Sorry fellas," the bartender said, taking their empty glasses, "I'm closing up now."

"But it's only eleven thirty," Rocky protested.

"So I close early tonight, boys—

sorry."

"Aw, you and yer watered whiskey kin go to hell," Humphrey retorted, as he stumbled for the door.

ARM IN ARM, Rocky and Humphrey waltzed up the dark road, not knowing or worrying where they were headed.

"Humphrey, ole boy . . ."

"Call me Humphy, Pal, 'cus we're pals."

"All righty! Humphy. Humphy ole boy . . ."

"Yesh?"

"I ferget."

"Dash good."

They walked on, singing as they went.

"We wish you a Merry Chrish-mesh,

We wish you a Merry Chrish-mesh,

An' a Happy New Year!"

"Happy New Year!" Rocky shouted.

"Dish is a new year fer us, Pal," Humphrey slurred, as he patted Rocky's broad shoulders.

"It sure is, Pal."

"From now on, Pal, we're nuttin'—we're nobody at all in particular."

"Jes nobodies, Pal. Nobody cares about nobody and nobody cares about us. Ergo, we are nobodies."

"Ergo? What does dat mean?"

"Logic, Humphy."

"Yeah!" He poked Rocky playfully in the ribs. "Dats logical!"

They both roared uncontrollably and squatted down in the center of the highway.

"Gees, Pal," laughed Rocky, "you sure are a funny one."

"Yeah, I gesh sho!"

Rocky fell into a fit of laughter and rolled about the highway holding in his sides. Humphrey stopped laughing when he heard the sound of an oncoming car.

"Shay, pal," he said, as he pinned Rocky to the pavement, "I think maybe dat a car ish com-min'."

"So what?"

"Should we move?"

"What in the hell for, Pal? Dat car has no right here on the sidewalk."

"But, Pal, ain't we on da street?"

"Naa! Look, Humphy pal, sidewalks was made for people to walk on—right?"

"Right."

"And we're people and we've been walkin'—ain't we?"

"Right."

"Ergo," Rocky chuckled, "ergo we're on da sidewalk—right?"

"It's logical," he agreed going into a fit of laughter again.

They watched the headlights of the car as it hurriedly approached them. On it came, heading straight for them in the center of the road.

PURITY PRUDENTON saw the two figures sitting in her path in just enough time to come to a screeching halt, not two feet in front of the two petrified drunks.

Purity leapt from her car and rushed to the side of Humphrey.

"Where in the world have you been? I've been looking all over

for you."

"We've been celabratin', Baby!" Humphrey rang, "jush celabrat-in'!"

"You're drunk!" she said in horror.

"Dash right, Purity. We are royally, stinking with booze."

"Ain't it grand?" Humphrey added gleefully.

"Humphrey Lyndon," Purity said with authority in her voice, "you just get yourself up and march over to my car and get in."

"Yesh, Dear," he said, resigned to her will.

"Wait a minute, Purity," Rocky called after them. "He can't go back to school."

"And why not?" Purity said sternly.

"'Cus," continued Rocky, as he struggled to his feet, "if he does, he'll be beaten to wit'in one inch of his worthless life by the Alpha Malarias—dash why not."

"He's right, my love," admitted Humphrey. "He's one hunrit percent right—absolutely!"

"All right then, Purity said, "I have a plan. You're coming home

with me."

Purity pushed Humphrey into the car and crawled over him to the driver's seat.

"Where are we going?" Humphrey asked, as they sped away from the bewildered Rocky.

"I told you, we're going to my home."

"Why?" he asked innocently.

"We're going to get married. We'll quit school and get married."

"Thash nice," Humphrey murmured as he snuggled up close to her.

"I'll convince Daddy that you're just the man to manage his new lollipop factory."

Humphrey looked through blurred eyes at Purity's face. In the soft moonlight she radiated beauty. Humphrey liked the idea of marrying her. He was satisfied and pleased with the way things turned out. He gently laid his head on Purity's soft shoulder.

"We'll be so happy," Purity purred. "Won't we?"

Humphrey answered her only with a low, contented belch.

DEMARCATIION

"The vernal equal-night arrived
Last night."

"What?"

"I say the vernal equal-night . . ."

"Oh.

But how?

Strange no blue-birds

Yet.

Maybe the grass is green

Under the snow.

Odd that the leaf-crop

Should fail.

No robin-egg skies,

No robin eggs,

No robins."

"But look at all the sparrows . . ."

"Pshaw! They've been here

Winter long,

Too stupid to south-follow Spring

To Miami.

Confoundable arrangement!

Month-monopolies

By Monster Winter . . .

There ought to be a law!

Who's responsible for this . . . this mess?

Oh!

Pardon me."

—Francis Creel

DECEMBER THIRD

What is it makes
a man's brain bogged,
as shod in mire-muck?
Like mine.
What causes lakes
to stand befogged,
as stagnant shire-shuck?
Like swine.
Perhaps it's just the loathesome fact
that life requires its porcine tact,
its royal courts in miniature,
its gossipry noblessed entr'acte,
and all its hypocrites demure
who make man's post a sinecure.
But that's today:
The kind
when sun begins to rise
and hurt your squinty eyes
and blind.
A day
when birds screech sourish notes
through never-ceasing throats
of prey.
Tomorrow's sure,
and sure to be the kind of day
when men have something kind to say
of men.

—Francis Creel

Mary C. Pursley
Creative Writing
Contest Award
1961

GRAVE SCARS

Pudgy Earth is at it still,
turning his bulky head
ever 'round
his solar glass—
propped upon a spacious sill,
burning atomic red,
golden crowned
with fissioned gas.
His cheeky obesity
is pimple-cleaned
and simple-preened
to please his own plump vanities,
as magma pasty
erupts his skin
in vulcan din,
eructing loud inanities.
His woody beard
of stubble pine
is lathered stiff
with shaving cream of snow.
And smoothsome seared
by March sunshine
it's just as if
it were a year ago.

And mortal we,
with signless pore-to-pore slow pace,
crawl lazily
upon his macrocosmic face,
mere heedless germs
that may malignant be or not,
or headless worms
content, perhaps, with vermin's lot.
To make a mark
an enterprising few dig deep
into the dark,
dark zones where former diggers sleep—
or microbe-block
the seeping, epidermal flood
and then unlock
infectious germs in Earthen blood.

But pudgy Earth is at it still,
turning his bulky head
ever 'round
his solar glass,
checking close from vale to hill,
dreading to see the tread
he has found
do scar his mass.

He's ever scabbed and ever marred,
But on his primping course he keeps.
I hope he's not tomorrow scarred
To mark the place this digger sleeps.

—Francis Creel

A CLOUD OF SMOKE

How so does the smoke
Hang silently over the single lamp
Lighting the chilly room?
Its pale watchfulness
Is spread like a suspended
Thought.
The glow penetrates it,
Giving it an evenness of luminescence
Making a cold, forbidding
Uneasiness hang hungrily
In the circle of light.
Nothing distinguishable save the
Circle of light and the cloud
Of incorporeal smoke.
A dome hangs always in a round
Arch of undefined shimmer.
A sadness faints,
And a passion is aroused.
A passion for the death
Of a living, breathing
Suicide sitting quietly
Beneath the cloud of smoke.
The time—late at night—
Is for a life—buried in
Confusion, sweet confusion,
And utter despair—
To live . . .
To live with a new
Breath,
To dispel the cloud
To give the arch of light
Its rightful dominance.

—Daniel Gunczy

A DREAM

Let fall one tear
For the sake of a falling tear.
Here is truth.
Deep within the unpleasant
 Walls of flesh
At a point of calm and tranquility
Is a sphere of everything.
Here, in existence and in non-existence,
Does the tear form.—Its purpose?
 Freedom without.
Freedom to incite another tear
To form and dissolve a truth
 Within itself.
A dream is a tear.
A quiet beginning, a gentle passage.
A descent to a place where
 All dreams unite.—
 The uncharted river Hope.
Pure is a dream. Silent is a dream.
Its journey through darkness
Is its energy to illumine itself.
A dream of the past,
 An equivocal bank of the river.
A dream of the present,
 A fleeting boat on the river.
A dream of the future,
 The river itself.
And a tear from that precious sphere
Is unbearable pleasure,
Is violent pain.

—Daniel Gunczy

TO—

You are in my thoughts now.
Yes, at this moment
While you are there and I here,
Although I cannot picture you too well,
The sunlight I feel is you.
Simplicity is this moment.
A pattern of flowers,
 A movement in my heart.
 And the memories.
It could rain, but the sunlight
Will not dissolve.
I looked yesterday—
 And wept.
Twice we talked, once we walked.
On a mountain in a valley.
By a stream on the street.
A laugh, a serious look.
Who understands but a cloudy sky?
Come, let's tell the night
And laugh because it's all so
Wild and no one knows.
We can be quiet and be loud
 And damn with faint praise
 Our trail of surprised expressions.
 We can skip and shout
And then become peaceful.
At the end of a day—
Goodnight with a smile,
A light kiss and happiness.
Congratulate ourselves,
 We might fool everyone.
With your smile the moon
 And the sun might
 Unite. And we would laugh

—Daniel Geczy

A BIRD

This bird sitting here
on the bough outside
my window.
Tiny and lively as
he quickly moves his
wings for balance
Against the harsh wind.
Eyes are so small
(that, I can see)
as he turns untiringly
On that branch. Eyes and
Wings so free that there are
explosions of joy
coming from his proud,
happy breast.
See the smile of gladness
cross his miniature face?
A bath he takes in the
wind and the sunlight.
The cold and the warmth
together are his.
Now he's looking at me.
He sees all things around him.
With quick, startling, exuberant
movements he proclaims
his vital independence.
If the window were not here,
I might speak to him
And question him with tears.
Now he's not moving.
In those tiny eyes there's
Reflection.
Soft, peaceful reflection.
O to know what quietness is
going on behind those dark,
tiny eyes. Can he be
Composing a song of freedom

for the wind and
the sunlight
And me? Is it that he wants
Me to join him?
Because that's happy.
And we would cry
Because it's time to cry.
You and I to say hello to each other.
And maybe wink and maybe
Sing—with a bird.
As ice melts and grass grows
We give each other a knowing look,
And there you are because
I am here. And a thought between.
Why don't we go for a walk
On the limb of that tall tree?
Can he be telling of
Heaven?
Had men his balance,
What wonder would be seen!
Just swaying on the branch,
Now swinging! Now laughing!
Now happy!
Golden-brown in the sun.
Ruffled and unchained in the wind.
The sounds I can hear
are sounds angelic.
Sounds magnificent to
Barred wishes.
This bird has led others
to feel and know
the bliss of the open.
Away from wall.
Now he's gone in the blink
of my eye and the
second of hesitation,
Preoccupation. The hope,
The joy, lost to the covetousness
of the wind.
Isn't it
Always like that?

—Daniel Gunczy

THE

GREEN

The mist rolled off the river and out over the city. The darkness was slowly pushing the retreating red rays of the sunset over the horizon, and the naked skyscrapers began to clothe themselves from top to bottom in the gloomy black of the late-winter night.

by

Francis

Creel



On one side of the slow-moving water the spell was already cast, as the people who lived there quietly let the lid of the casket of night close upon them. But those who lived in the grove of skyscrapers stridently protested that life live through the night, and neon lights flickered in rhythm with the noise that beat against the crawling mist. The murmur of night life in the city was carried by the still, dense air across the rolling stream, and it clattered through the closely packed rows of houses and apartments, tinkling as far as it could into the narrow alleys.

The murmur was faint when it reached the ears of an old man sitting on his porch. But he heard it.

He laid his pipe bowl-down on the arm of the chair he was sitting in. He stood up and leaned against the rotting guard rail, his eyes fixed on a tenth-story apartment window across the river. An evil little smile poised itself above the one tooth left in the old man's head. He watched the lit window for some time; then it went out. Chuckling to himself, he took his pipe into the house, came back out, locked the door, and stuck the key into his vest pocket.

He slowly made his way to the place of neon and music, scraping his feet over the damp sidewalks. The streets were deserted until he came to the bridge. There he saw a squad car lazily cruising in the direction whence he had just come. He pulled his collar up about his ears and started across the bridge. He looked down at the

river but couldn't see the water because of the mist. But he knew it was there because he could hear it lapping against the piers, lapping, lapping . . . He spat and continued on his way.

The red tint of the sun had drained over the horizon, and neither the moon nor the stars could be seen. The dim little glows of the lamp posts and the phosphorescence of the city on the other bank lit up little except the eery floating mists. At intervals, under the aureoles of the lamps, could be seen a hunched figure passing over the bridge and towards the sparkling forest of steel and brick.

On the other side of the river the old man entered a new world. Wide streets, big houses, glaring and blinking lights, music, noise, traffic and . . . he walked faster, for there were people on these sidewalks, most of them young. They stared at him. They stared at his clothes too. Why did they like to stare at an old man in shabby clothes? Maybe an old man frightened them, made them afraid that time might one day put them in shabby clothes . . . He scowled at everybody who passed him and moved quickly towards the hub of the city.

He stopped across the street from one of the higher buildings in town and counted up to the tenth floor. The window was still dark. He crossed the street and entered the building.

He stood for a moment just inside the door. The room he was in

was a huge hotel parlor. An enormous and elaborate chandelier hung precariously from the center of the lofty ceiling. Damask draperies swooped luxuriantly towards the carpeted marble floors. Large, green plants wound their tendrils around imposing Corinthian columns.

He managed to slip into the elevator before the desk clerk saw him. Those fellows were so haughty.

"Tenth floor."

"Yes, sir," mumbled the operator.

His stomach sank as the lift rose. He didn't think he would ever get used to this contraption. He wondered if Mike ever had . . .

"Ten."

He grinned as he stepped out. Almost there.

He scraped down the corridor and stopped before one of the row of untype doors, number ten.

He knocked timidly at first, with the tips of his fingers, as if he were afraid to startle the occupant. He heard nothing from inside, and the door remained shut. He rapped more sharply, with his knuckles. Again he heard nothing, but the door swung open as he was about to knock again.

A strongly built, good-looking man stood in the frame of the door.

"Dad!" he exclaimed. "What brings you across the river at this time of day?" He ushered the old man into the vestibule and shut the door.

"It's night already, Mike," said

the old man with a cocky grin.

"Why . . . so it is, so it is." He smiled at his father. "Never mind that, though, it's nice to see you, Dad, it really is." His smile vanished, and his voice grew to a whisper. "What do you want—money?"

The old man showed his tooth when he grinned. He looked over his son's shoulder into the large room behind him.

A pair of pale, feminine arms rose up over the large divan facing the fireplace. They held a sparkling glass of champagne, and the old man could hear her chortling to herself.

"Winter sure turned your wife's tan in a hurry, didn't it?"

"Yes . . . yes, it was a long season."

"When is she getting back from her trip?" He chuckled when he saw how deeply his boy blushed.

"How much do you want, old man?" Mike took out his wallet and glowered. "Five?"

The old man gloated but shook his head.

"Ten?"

"Ten times ten, my boy."

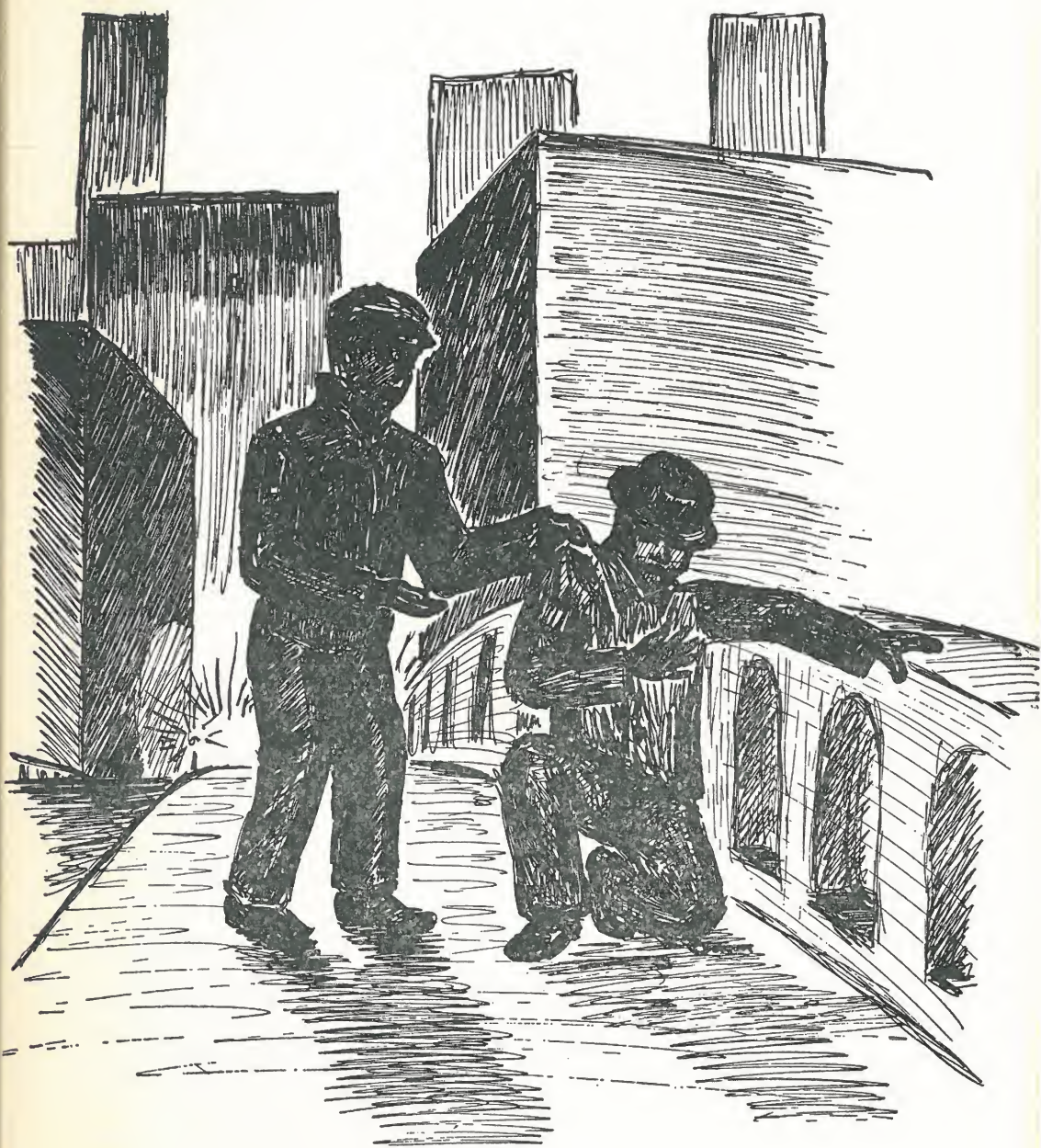
"What!" hissed Mike. "You're out of your head, old man. I can't afford a C."

"You can't afford alimony either. It can go pretty steep. I know."

Sullenly Mike counted out five bills and pressed them into the shaking hand of his father.

"Thanks, my boy. I'll never forget this act of . . ."

"Get out!" Mike snapped.



He pushed the old man out and slammed the door.

The old man cackled and pressed the tiny roll of bills to his lips. He laughed again when he saw the light coming from under the door flick out. Cramming the money deep into his pocket, he walked lightly down the corridor and gaily pushed the elevator button.

As he slowly made his way back home, he thought about Mike. Fine lad. A son who would make any father proud . . . fine apartment, fine clothes, good looks, and he had money to burn! A pleased expression stole over his features. Yep, he had really given Mike a good upbringing, made a real success of him.

When he was almost to the river he heard footsteps behind him. Was he being followed? No, no, why should anyone want to follow *him*? He listened as the footsteps grew faster and more deliberate. Terrified, he looked back. There was a big man not more than ten strides behind him.

He began to run. So did the man following him. He reached the bridge, but he knew he couldn't make it all the way home. Panting and scared witless he stopped and turned around. He dropped to his knees and covered his head with his hands. The big man reached him and grabbed him around the neck.

"Wha . . . what d-do you want?" blurted the old man.

"Take it easy, Mac, I'm not gonna hurt you." He frisked him

and reached into his pocket. "I just wanted to see if you were carrying any more of this stuff . . ."

"No! No!" screamed the old man.

"Shut up! You're getting off easy."

The old man grabbed his assailant's coat. "Please don't take my money!"

The robber hacked the old man's neck and ran.

The old man lay on the sidewalk and cried. But suddenly he stopped and looked with horror in the direction of his house. The man had said ". . . any *more* of this stuff . . .!" Had he found the rest of it?

He scrambled to his feet and madly ran across the bridge and down the long, dark streets.

His ribs seemed about to shatter as he jumped up the steps of his porch. He felt his heart wildly pounding as he searched his vest pocket for the key. He looked and saw that the lock had been forced! He plunged through the door and fell over the scattered furniture. He landed next to the broken teapot where he had kept his pension money for that month. To hell with that! He had ten hundred dollars stowed away in the coal bin! God! how his heart was aching! He leaped over the shambles and threw open the lid of the bin . . . but he didn't see what was in it. He collapsed over the edge of the bin, and in a few moments his chest stopped heaving, his limp arms dangling loosely over the undisturbed pile of coal.

by Norm Netko

Catholic Literature has come to label so many literary efforts, that a precise definition is lost in a maze of ambiguous descriptions. Many think that a Catholic work is one written about a religious subject or by a Catholic author, but these are certainly not requirements for Catholic writing. Nor does this imply that a work with a religious subject or one written by a Catholic is necessarily Catholic literature.

The first step in defining Catholic literature is to define litera-

himself there. Literature reveals the similarities, the common interests, the common destinies, the kinship shared by all men and gives man a better understanding of his fellow men.

The term "catholic" means universal. Catholic literature is universal literature, literature with a universal philosophy—one that explains all reality. Many of the philosophies found in secular literature are incomplete, at best. They overemphasize one element in life, such as the certainty of death, and they draw rash conclusions from it: "Laugh, drink, and be merry, for tomorrow we die." Catholic literature looks at the whole life of man. It examines hu-

WHAT IS CATHO

ture in general. Literature might be called a criticism of life—a verbal picture of reality that is somewhat distorted to bring out a certain point. Literature can have a variety of purposes: amusement, social reform, ridicule, praise; but good literature always has a central idea, one reason for telling a story.

Literature depicts a particular man in a particular situation. It shows what society has done to him and how he has reacted. It gives us a glimpse of the battle between good and evil that is constantly being waged in every man. Literature is a kind of X-ray machine, with which the reader can look into the heart of man and see

man actions, thoughts, and frailties in the light of the whole truth, as we know it. Man is depicted in his daily struggle with evil, just as he is in secular literature, except that his life now means something; all his struggling and suffering is not without a purpose.

Catholic literature makes no attempt to cover up the facts. Man's life on earth is cluttered with one hardship after another. He often doubts whether there is any Ruling Power over this bedlam of sorrow. Mauriac, Bernanos, and Claudel are Catholic novelists who paint man as he is—struggling—and the result is a dark picture. Pessimistic as it is, however, somewhere in their art there is a hint

of final solution to all human problems and redemption in another world.

Catholic literature does not shy away from sin. It recognizes sin for what it is, a very real element in the life of every man. Sin is attractive, it is alluring; but it is not pretty. The Catholic artist shows a man who is taken over by sin, a man who chose sin because he saw it as something good. Sin, however, never ends in happiness—it is something negative and saddening in a man's life, and the Catholic artist shows the final effect of sin in man, his own destruction, a revolting but realistic sight.

Catholic novels, true representations of life, must contain meta-

amusement or social betterment. Through his presentation of the complete truth, he has the task of showing the modern world that morality still applies and is very much a part of life. He must re-educate society by giving it a picture of itself, in its futile attempt to find happiness while it excludes the Source of Happiness. He must not preach; he does not have to. All he need do is paint the truth—the whole life of man: his struggles, his moments of happiness, his joys, his fears, his successes and failures. The Catholic artist must paint this picture and explain what it all means in terms of man's destiny. He must show man where he is going and what life is

LIC LITERATURE?

physical aspects: we look at reality and ask, "Why?" Such a metaphysical question demands judgment. True art cannot be objective; it must be interpretive, and true interpretation is always judgment. But to make true judgments we have to know the whole truth. Catholic literature treats the whole truth.

Erik von Kuehnelt-Leddihn said in *America* (March 8, 1941): "The true (Catholic) writer is not an 'educator,' but a poor and humble Christian who tries to describe and interpret terrestrial happenings from a metaphysical angle." Still, the Catholic author has a purpose in writing that transcends the usual goals of

all about.

Catholic literature, then, does not imply a Catholic subject or plot. Nor does it necessitate a Catholic author. Anyone who understands the complete scope of life can write Catholic literature, as many non-Catholics, like Willa Cather, have done.

Good literature is necessarily Catholic, according to a writer in *Catholic Digest* (December, 1947). Both Catholic dogma and literature are witnesses of human nature and the universe. Both picture man, not as a creature of the drawing board or stock exchange, but as a lonely, awful soul confronted by the Source of all souls.

OUR STILTS OF SAPLING GREEN

Amidst mankind's first few stumbling steps
There arose in craggy Greece a race of giants,
Who fashioned from the Olympian mount
The torch of truth,
And lit it with the spark of wisdom.
Behind its prudent glare they explored
The dark and mysterious cavern of the stars,
And its fruits were made known to them.
But, being only mortal, in time their
Once strong bodies slackened to the bone,
And their eager eyes were blinded to the world,
And uttering a final prayer
They toppled to their grave;
But with their dying moan they passed the
Dimming flame to that wretched lot,
Their neighbors across the sea.
And these people were not giants,
But wished with all their hearts to be,
So they fashioned from a nearby grove
Some stilts of sapling green,
And thus they were tall—but not giants.
Believing them to be a colossal race,
The people of the world cowered in their shadow.
And they tottered to the ends of the seas
Upon their wobbly crutches,
But cooked their meals in the magic torch.
And the stilts being unsteady
And they being but practical men,

They too toppled, but ingloriously,
And the torch lay by their sides.
And the incoming tide snuffed the dying flame
And the torch was buried deep in the sands of time.
And ages later, a passing youth chanced to
See a glimmer in the sand and was curious,
And where others might have passed it by
He stopped and dug it free with bleeding hands,
And thinking it to be the Holy Grail,
He brought it to his father.
And his father, being a wise old man,
Blessed his son and thanked his Lord
And praised the wondrous gift.
And a bolt from heaven crackled to the earth
And set the golden torch ablaze.
And the man bred a race of giants
Who found again the lost Hellenic path.
And the deep shadows of the universe
Once again were brightened.
But as before, strength ebbed from the strong
And the mammoth horde went limp,
And the torch slipped slowly to
The greedy hands below.
And from greedy hand to greedy hand
The torch has come to us.
And its flame is sickly green,
And its flame is slowly dying.
Look out, mankind!
Your stilts are unsteady.

—William Seidensticker

**A MAN'S A MAN
FOR A' THAT**

by

JOHN MADDEN

A plowman and the son of a peasant farmer, Robert Burns was born at Alloway, in Ayrshire, Scotland on January 25, 1759. His early home was a two-roomed clay cottage constructed by his father. Bobie was the eldest of seven children and spent his youth working on various farms in the neighborhood. Education was a luxury enjoyed by very few, but young Robert managed to get a fair amount of formal learning from a man named Murdock, an excellent teacher employed by Mr. Burns and many others in the neighborhood to instruct their children. Robert had a great mind and an unquenchable thirst for knowledge. He was an ardent reader and fortunate in having access to a variety of books, which enabled him to counteract many deficiencies. He received a very substantial education in English, and toyed carelessly with Latin and French.

At the age of sixteen or seventeen he began to compose rhymes, but his writing was of no consequence until nearly six years later. Influenced by his mother's high-spirited nature and the numerous love affairs in which he became entangled, he wrote in a style which remains unequaled. James Douglas, Scottish biographer and authority on Burns, states, "Burns has no rival in the art of singing the soul into song and setting the heart to music. His poetry is pure passion." Unlike other lyricists who are literary at their best, Burns is literary when he is at his

worst. He wrote of life as he himself saw it, setting into words that wondrous melody of the Scotch countryside. He was, first and last, a people's poet because he was most at home with the common folk. His early life was a riotous association with farmers in the field, companions at an inn, complaisant girls, rowdy countrymen, beggars and bawds.

At fourteen Robert fell in love, and apparently never fell out of it; consistently a lover, he was inconsistent only to the objects of his love. In his twenty-sixth year he was confronted by Jean Armour, who announced she was with child. The poet promised to marry her by Scottish law, but the Armour family's dislike for Burns made marriage impossible, even though Jean gave birth to twins and Robert acknowledged paternity. It was not until three years and four children later that he was able to marry her. In the meantime, he had become engaged to Mary Campbell, written of in his poems as "Highland Mary," but she died in childbirth. Burns' loves were varied. Class or station in life mattered not a particle to the young poet. He loved a woman's being, not her body; his heart beat wildly at the thought of life and fulfillment of love.

Of his love poems, those written to Jean Armour are by far his tenderest, but he celebrated his other loves with equal fervor. He welcomed his illegitimate children in verses of deep devotion and affection. In "A Poet's Welcome To

His Love-Begotten Daughter,"
Burns gave bold attest to his fatherhood.

"For if thou be what I wad hae thee,
And tak the counsel I shall gie thee,

I'll never rue my trouble wi' thee.
The cost nor shame o't,
"But be a loving father to thee,
And brag the name o't."

Not bravado but truthful pride prompted his exultation in the triumphs of the flesh. As an indication of Burns' love for Jean, and as a proof that his actions were from his heart, not his senses, one need only read from "Jean," one of his earlier poems.

"I see her in the dewy flowers,
I see her sweet and fair:
I hear her in the tunefu' birds,
I hear her charm the air:
There's not a bonie flower that springs

"By fountain, shaw, or green,
There's not a bonie bird that sings,
But minds me o' my Jean."

His every thought was of "bonie Jean," but his love for Mary Campbell was equally open and very strong. Burns grieved deeply at her death; his mind was tortured daily with haunting memories. The last stanza of "Highland Mary" reveals the poet's remorse:

"O pale, pale now, those rosy lips
I aft hae kissed sae fondly!
And closed for aye the sparkling glance

That dwelt on me sae kindly!
And mold'ring now in silent dust,
That heart that lo'ed me dearly!

But still within my bosom's core
Shall live my Highland Mary."

Authority was a hateful thing in Burns' eyes. He challenged it with heated heart and flaming mind. For men to lay down laws on other men was a bone of contention often gnawed at in the poet's writing. In the "Drinking Song" from the poem, *The Jolly Beggars*, Burns lampoons what he considers the blaskened heart of government and lashes at the stilted attitude of a pseudo-moral society.

"A fig for those by law protected!
Liberty's a glorious feast!
Courts for cowards were erected,
Churches built to please the priest.

What is title, what is treasure,
What is reputation's care?
If we lead a life of pleasure,
'Tis no matter how or where!
A fig for, *etc.*

With the ready trick and fable,
Round we wander all the day;
And at night in barn or stable,
Hug our doxies on the hay.
A fig for, *etc.*

Does the train-attended carriage
Thro' the country lighter rove?
Does the sober bed of marriage
Witness brighter scenes of love?
A fig for, *etc.*

Life is all a variorum,
We regard not how it goes;
Let them cant about decorum,
Who have character to lose.
A fig for, *etc.*

Here's to budgets, bags and wallets!
Here's to all the wandering train.

Here's our ragged brats and cal-
lets,

One and all cry out: Amen!

A fig for, *etc.*

Chorus

A fig for those by law protected!

Liberty's a glorious feast!

Courts for cowards were erected,

Churches built to please the
priest."

Such writing was the pouring
forth of many years' thought and
frustration. Burns was a rebel.
That flaming heart which heated
his bosom saw through the

schemes of his fellowmen. He was
often chilled by their scorning
laughs and seeming candor. Yet,
as Douglas expresses it, ". . . so-
ciety idolized him because society
is too stupid to fear its deadliest
enemy, the poet." Indeed Burns
was deadly. His poetry began a
revolution which surpassed any
other. The revolution of Burns
was an insurrection of man's
spirit, revealed in its naked real-
ity. Burns was an individualist.
He felt that each man should be
"a law unto himself," and act in



a manner which seems right in his *own* eyes. "Let his conduct be controlled solely by the statutes of his own conscience." To Burns only one person was unable to forgive sin, the sinner.

In 1786 he printed a collection of his works entitled *Poems, Chiefly In the Scottish Dialect*. The spirit contained in those simple songs hastened the book throughout the country, and soon a number of copies circulated around Edinburgh. Immediately upon reading the radical writings, the high-society of the capital of Scotland invited young Burns to join their circles. What seemed then to be his triumph was in reality his downfall. He became a novelty, a rustic plowboy turned poet. He was wined, dined, and led by the nose throughout Edinburgh; then, just as a child discards a ball that has lost its newness, so was Burns tossed aside and given a kick to start rolling.

The dejected poet returned to Ayr; he was crushed. That heart once afire with passion and love now burned in doubt and loneliness. "The best laid schemes of mice and men gang aft agley, An' lea's us nought but grief an' pain for promised joy!" His damaged spirit is quite evident in this quote from "To A Mouse," written shortly after his return from Edinburgh.

In search of peace, Burns married his beloved Jean and returned to farming, but he found only depression in every furrow he plowed. From memories of gaiety

and delight he drew his lingering breath and waited anxiously for the book of life to close. He deeply realized the core of his tragedy and knew *his* society was the woodbine and roses that banked the River Ayr. In burning introspection he called himself "a poor, damned, incautious, duped, unfortunate fool; the sport, the miserable victim of rebellious pride and bedlam passions."

Self-criticism was typical of Burns. He catalogued all, or nearly all, his faults. He was a complex individual, a man of many moods and many roles. Soon the misery and depression of life became too heavy a burden for his heart to bear. In an effort to forget his frustration he began to drink heavily. A digestive ailment, afflicting him since childhood, was seriously aggravated by the large consumption of liquor. Ignoring repeated warnings, Burns continued to drink until his resistance was so worn away that he became easy prey for any disease. After a futile bout with a lingering cold, the thirty-seven year old poet slipped into unconsciousness, a piercing pain tearing at his side. Amidst dark dreams of a tragic life he breathed his last; that loving heart split in half by the heavy weight of disillusion and despair.

We cannot judge Robert Burns by natural standards, for he was not a natural man. His imagination could not be drugged by religion or literature. His persistent readings of *Shenstone* and the *Shorter Catechism* only convinced

him more that morality was an individual thing. The commandments of God were but the feelings of man. However, Burns was not corrosively irreligious or spitefully atheistic. Douglas says, "... there is no malignity in his agnosticism, for it is based on the imaginative humor that flies where reason crawls."

Such a philosophy gave the poet the insight that he possessed. How could another type of man have so wonderfully grasped the human sentiment of "Cotter's Saturday Night," or portrayed so vividly the melancholy of life as in "Man Was Made To Mourn?" His songs of love are, in Douglas' words, "clear as dew, fresh as dawn, and alive with pathetic gaiety and impassioned regret." Burns catapults above his rival Byron in the ironic humor which fills his writings. In fact, it is this humor, not sentiment or imagination, that is the great vitalizing force of Burns' poetry. Like Byron's, Burns' work is furthest from literature and nearest to life! Burns could not see the world through the glasses of his pseudo-sophisticated countrymen. Rather, he viewed all men with a perception comparable to an X-ray. Not even the poet him-

self could escape that penetrating vision of soul.

The morality of Burns is questioned constantly. And I must admit his actions were not always commendable. But I cannot help but wonder at the shortsightedness of critics, who concentrate so hard on a man's faults that they completely overlook his attributes. Burns realized full well his shortcomings; he made no excuse—I feel none was necessary to begin with. In the words of Douglas, "Burns never mistook his weakness for strength." That inner drive which brought so many problems was actually the main contributor to the poet's brilliant writing and caused him to be rated with the highest among the poets of human relationships. Combining his vision of life with his keen, satirical humor, he created a form of poetry that is almost a standard. No longer can a man hide his inner feelings when once he has read the poems of Burns. Contained in the verses of those simple Scottish songs are reflections of passion found nowhere else; in every work there looms forth a true picture of humanity and a vivid description of life.